

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (currently amended): A method of measuring electrical capacitance in which ~~one or more~~ a scanning capacitance microscopes ~~deteeting~~ detects ~~one or more~~ at least one surfaces by means of ~~one or more~~ at least one electrically conductive probes are used to measure ~~one or more~~ the electrical capacitances of ~~one or more~~ at least one semiconductor surfaces, the method comprising:

~~one or more first steps wherein one or more~~ forming a clean surfaces ~~are formed on one or more~~ at least one semiconductor samples by surface treatment;

~~one or more second steps wherein at least one of the semiconductor sample or samples on which one or more clean surfaces were formed at at least one of the first step or steps is promptly placed~~ placing the at least one semiconductor sample on which a clean surface was formed in one or more an ultrahigh vacuum environments or an one or more inert gas environments and ~~is maintained~~ maintaining therein; and

~~one or more third steps wherein one or more electrically conductive probes, on one or more surfaces of which one or more insulating films are formed, are used to measure one or more~~ measuring the electrical capacitances of ~~at least one of the~~ at least one semiconductor sample surface ~~or surfaces maintained in one or more~~ the ultrahigh vacuum environments or ~~one or more~~ in the inert gas environments with the at least one electrically conductive probe, wherein the at least one electrically conductive

probe has an insulating film formed thereon ~~at at least one of the second step or steps.~~

2. (currently amended): A method of measuring electrical capacitance according to claim 1 ~~in which at least one of~~ wherein the insulating film ~~or films of at least one of~~ formed on the at least one electrically conductive probe ~~or probes~~ is a vapor-deposited film of insulating diamond.

3. (currently amended): A method of measuring electrical capacitance according to claim 1 ~~in which at least one of~~ wherein the insulating film ~~or films of at least one of~~ formed on the at least one electrically conductive probe ~~or probes~~ is a vapor-deposited film of DLC.

4. (currently amended): A method of measuring electrical capacitance according to claim 1 ~~in which at least one of~~ wherein the insulating film ~~or films of at least one of~~ formed on the at least one electrically conductive probe ~~or probes~~ is a vapor-deposited film of alumina.

5. (currently amended): A method of measuring electrical capacitance according to claim 1 ~~in which at least one of~~ wherein the insulating film ~~or films of at least one of~~ formed on the at least one electrically conductive probe ~~or probes~~ is a vapor-deposited film of zirconium oxide.